

middle class, if you are a working person, the likelihood is you work longer hours for lower wages.

We need a change in economic policy. We need an OMB Director who can advise the President about the reality of the vast majority of the people, and not just the very wealthiest people in our country.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONRAD. Does the Senator from New Hampshire ask to speak for an additional 30 seconds?

Mr. GREGG. I thought I had some time reserved. I don't. I ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. Without objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I simply wish to note we are about to vote on the nomination for the Director of OMB, who is a man of high integrity and high quality, and who has the expertise to do this job well. I think we should presume that the President should have the right to appoint the person of his choosing to this office which is so uniquely part of the White House to begin with.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, let me end where I began. This is not about a personality; this is about policy. The fiscal policy of this administration has exploded the debt of our country at the worst possible time—right before the baby boom generation retires. Here is the record. It is undisputed. It is uncontradicted. It is a simple fact. The debt of this country under this policy—and Mr. Nussle is one of the architects of this policy—has skyrocketed from \$5.8 trillion at the end of the President's first year to \$8.9 trillion at the end of this year. So much of that debt is now held abroad. When this President came into office, there was \$1 trillion of U.S. debt held by foreign interests. That has now reached over \$2.1 trillion, a more than doubling of U.S. debt held abroad. That puts this country at risk.

We saw during the last few weeks the Chinese Minister indicate they might start to diversify out of dollar-denominated securities. Economists said if they chose to do that, they would push the United States into recession. In many ways, our economic future is now less in our hands and more in the hands of the people who hold our debt.

I ask my colleagues on the basis of policy to reject this nomination.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jim Nussle, of Iowa, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget?

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 69, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 311 Ex.]

YEAS—69

Akaka	Dole	Lugar
Alexander	Domenici	Martinez
Allard	Durbin	McCaskill
Barrasso	Ensign	McConnell
Baucus	Enzi	Murray
Bayh	Feingold	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Feinstein	Pryor
Bond	Graham	Roberts
Bunning	Grassley	Salazar
Burr	Gregg	Sessions
Cantwell	Hagel	Shelby
Cardin	Harkin	Smith
Carper	Hatch	Snowe
Casey	Hutchison	Specter
Chambliss	Inhofe	Stevens
Coburn	Isakson	Sununu
Cochran	Kohl	Tester
Coleman	Kyl	Thune
Collins	Landrieu	Vitter
Corker	Levin	Voinovich
Cornyn	Lieberman	Warner
Crapo	Lincoln	Webb
DeMint	Lott	Wyden

NAYS—24

Biden	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Kennedy	Reed
Boxer	Kerry	Reid
Brown	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Byrd	Lautenberg	Sanders
Clinton	Leahy	Schumer
Conrad	Menendez	Stabenow
Dorgan	Mikulski	Whitehouse

NOT VOTING—7

Brownback	Johnson	Obama
Craig	McCain	
Dodd	Murkowski	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

The majority leader.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY ON CASTING HIS 15,000TH VOTE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, earlier this morning, I made a very brief statement indicating that in the rush of business

when we went home for the summer work period, the last vote cast that day was Senator KENNEDY's 15,000th vote. There was a lot going on here at that time, and no one said anything. But I think it certainly is noteworthy—and that is an understatement—to recognize that this good man has passed everyone, except Senator BYRD, in the number of votes cast. Senator BYRD has cast over 18,000 votes, but there is no close second other than Senator KENNEDY.

We all recognize the tremendous work this man has done. As I said this morning, what a family. They have done so much for our country. Two of his brothers were assassinated. One of his other brothers was killed in the line of duty during World War II. Senator KENNEDY has done so much to leave a legacy in the Kennedy name that is remarkable.

We all admire the work he has done. As I said this morning, one of my pleasures in life is being able to come to the Senate and work with this great man. Working with him is such a pleasure because he can get on this floor and speak very loudly, and we all listen. But when you are working with him on legislation, he has so much humility, never wanting to take the limelight, always willing to step back and let those who are his junior move forward, and I include myself in that lot.

So congratulations to Senator KENNEDY.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, more than half a century ago, a right end—this is in the days before a tight end was invented—on the Harvard football team caught the eye of the head coach of the Green Bay Packers. The coach wrote the young man to ask if he might consider a pro career. But EDWARD MOORE KENNEDY had other ideas. He responded that he was flattered by the attention, but that he had already decided to go to law school and then go into another contact sport—politics.

I rise this afternoon in tribute to a man who is known to most people for his famous name but who is famous among his colleagues in the Senate for his warmth, good humor, and his simply astonishing ability and will to get things done.

Senator KENNEDY, as the majority leader just indicated, cast his 15,000th vote just before we broke for recess, solidifying his place as the third most prolific voter in the history of this body.

It was just the latest milestone in a storied 45-year career marked by countless others. And it surprised no one who has ever witnessed him speaking on the floor or off on the issues he cares about. The Senate has been his arena for more than four decades, and in the course of pushing thousands of pieces of legislation, he has worn out hundreds of staffers, committee members, and stenographers. He ignites